

We are writing to protest Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to broadcast an anti-Kerry documentary just days before the election. This is an example of what happens when media consolidation is not controlled.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves--OUR AIRWAYS--free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. This obligation includes being "fair and balanced" in their programming, not blatantly campaigning for one candidate over another. Their statements that they will just be "reporting the news" are a farce. The viewpoint of these particular Kerry-haters has been broadcast ad infinitum. There is nothing "new" about them.

"Freedom of Speech" does not cancel out the obligation of a broadcasting company to operate according to long-established journalism ethics. These ethics insist that great care must be taken, especially during the last few weeks before an election, to maintain neutrality and avoid manipulative reporting.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. We call upon you, for the safety of our democracy, to take action in preventing such biased broadcasting.